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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Certain consumers have expressed a desire to know,  
3 via food product labeling, whether they are purchasing or  
4 consuming food that contains ingredients that were developed  
5 through bioengineering; and

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WHEREAS, The United States Food and Drug Administration,  
7 the American Medical Association, the World Health  
8 Organization, the United States Department of Agriculture, the  
9 National Academy of Sciences, the United Nations Food and  
10 Agriculture Organization, and the European Food Safety  
11 Authority, among others, have all determined that genetically  
12 modified crops grow in the same fashion as those that are not  
13 genetically modified and that foods produced with genetically  
14 modified ingredients are safe for human consumption; and

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WHEREAS, The United States Food and Drug Administration's  
16 "Statement of Policy - Foods Derived from New Plant Varieties"  
17 was first published in 1992 to address relevant scientific,  
18 safety, and regulatory issues prior to the introduction of new  
19 plant varieties into the marketplace; and

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WHEREAS, Genetic modification technology has been used to  
21 produce food products for more than 25 years; and

1           WHEREAS, Seventy to eighty percent of the foods consumed in  
2 this country are genetically modified whole products or contain  
3 genetically modified ingredients; and

4           WHEREAS, Consumers in Illinois have a right to know the  
5 contents of the food they consume; and

6           WHEREAS, Any law passed in the State of Illinois regarding  
7 food labeling would likely be preempted by similar federal  
8 legislation presently being considered in our nation's  
9 capital; and

10           WHEREAS, A national clarification is needed to prevent the  
11 unneeded confusion for consumers, retailers, and manufacturers  
12 and to prevent an assortment of local and state regulations  
13 attempting to accomplish a similar goal; and

14           WHEREAS, A patchwork of local and state mandatory labeling  
15 laws and regulations will require manufacturers and retailers  
16 to make immediate and ongoing changes to their operations in  
17 order to comply with such requirements, which will undoubtedly  
18 result in higher food prices; and

19           WHEREAS, Requiring separate production runs,  
20 state-specific tracking units, segregated warehousing,  
21 trucking, and other logistical complexities to comply with a

1 puzzle board of local regulations and state-specific  
2 requirements will all result in higher food prices; and

3 WHEREAS, The National Organic Program housed within the  
4 Agricultural Marketing Service of the United States Department  
5 of Agriculture excludes the use of bioengineered crops or  
6 ingredients for growers wishing to sell their products as  
7 "organic"; consumers seeking to avoid food containing  
8 ingredients developed through bioengineering may do so by  
9 purchasing food labeled as "organic"; and

10 WHEREAS, Many food marketers, vendors, retailers, and food  
11 producers already differentiate various food products that do  
12 not contain ingredients developed through bioengineering, by  
13 voluntarily affixing "non-GMO" or similar labels on products;  
14 third party certifiers, such as the Non-GMO Project, create  
15 standards for farmers, processors, and manufacturers in  
16 sourcing non-bioengineered crop sources so that consumers who  
17 make a decision not to purchase food containing ingredients  
18 developed through bioengineering can avoid such products;  
19 therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL  
21 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we urge Congress to  
22 direct the clarification of national food labeling standards;  
23 and be it further

1           RESOLVED, That we show our support for meaningful consumer  
2 education and for measures that provide consumers with a  
3 reasonable means of identifying food products that may or may  
4 not have been developed using bioengineering; and be it further

5           RESOLVED, That we encourage food manufacturers to further  
6 study ways to inform consumers about food choices, as long as  
7 the information provided is truthful and not misleading; and be  
8 it further

9           RESOLVED, That we urge all Illinois State agencies to  
10 suspend any and all action with regards to state-specific food  
11 labeling requirements until guidance is received from the  
12 federal government.